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KENTFIELD LAND USE & DESIGN STUDY

MARIN COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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KENTFIELD LAND USE AND DESIGN STUDY

Approved By The
Marin County Planning Commission
March 23, 1981

Approved By The
Marin County Board of Supervisors
April 21, 1981

And As Amended By The
Marin County Board of Supervisors
February 23, 1982

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Land Use and Design Study for the Kentfield area was prepared by the Planning Department Staff at the request of the Board of Supervisors. The need for such a study became evident when the Planning Department received a number of separate Design Review Applications for new development within the Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and College Avenue commercial areas. Since Marin County currently has no adopted land use policies or specific design guidelines to use in evaluating individual proposals within this area, there has been little opportunity to assure that development occurs in an attractive, coordinated manner. The purpose of this study is to examine the existing land uses in this area to determine the potential for new development and/or redevelopment and to develop recommendations for appropriate land uses, design and sign standards.

The boundaries for the study area were selected on the basis of the existing zoning pattern. The study area includes all the commercial and multiple-family residential designated properties along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from McAllister Avenue to the Ross Town Limits, and along College Avenue from Sir Francis Drake to Kent Avenue at the Larkspur City Limits and the entrance to Kent Woodlands. The College of Marin campus, Kent Middle School and Ross General Hospital property have also been included within the study area boundary.

The study area was examined to determine its existing design character, the character of signs in the area, access and circulation constraints, and the potential for new development and/or redevelopment. Based on these findings, which are contained in Section II, recommendations for land use, rezonings, and design and sign standards were developed. These recommendations are contained in Section III.

KENTFIELD URBAN DESIGN STUDY

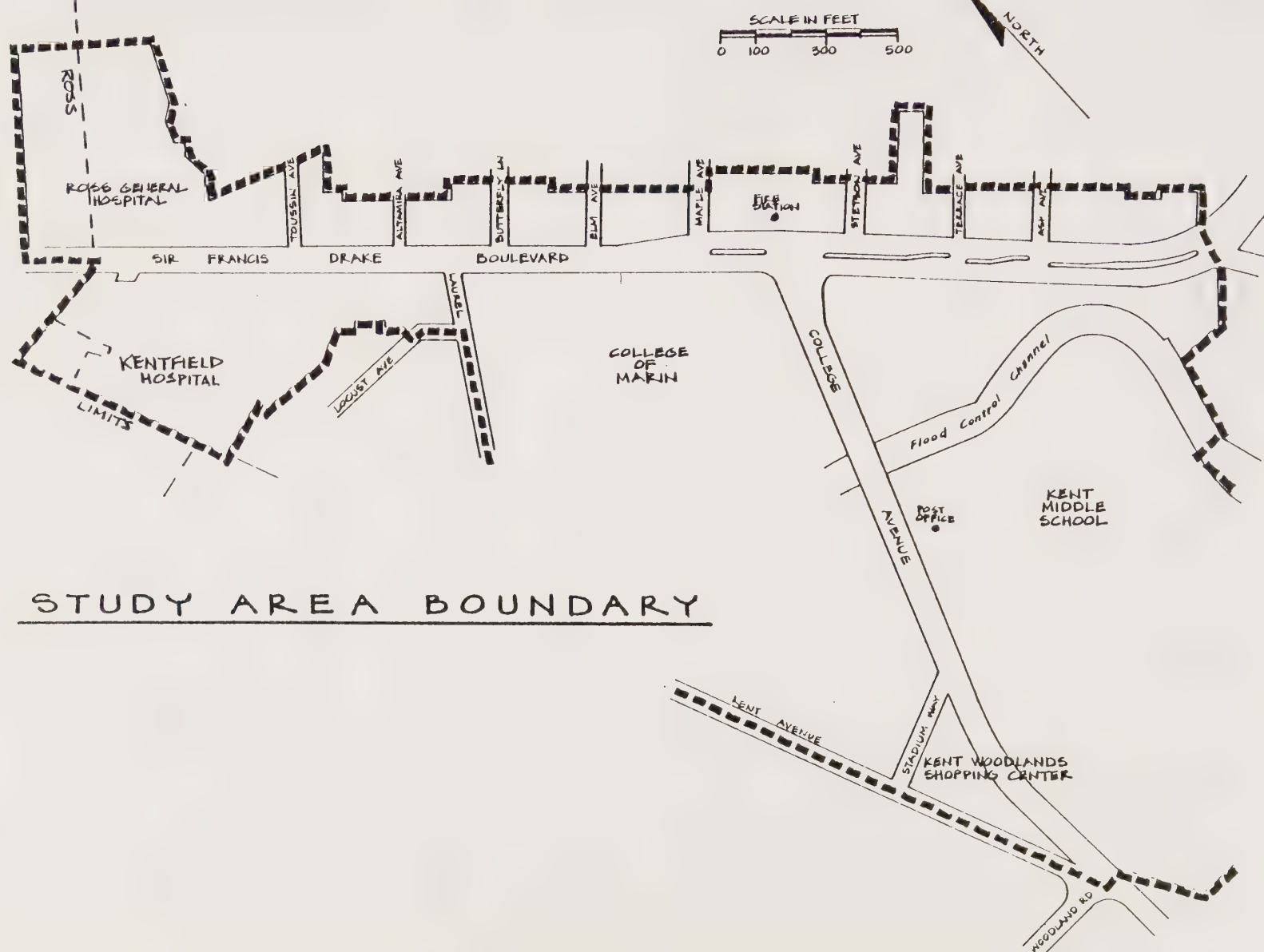


EXHIBIT 1

II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

To facilitate this analysis, three subareas of the study area were defined. The subarea boundaries were primarily based on existing land uses and design characteristics. The three subareas are: Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from McAllister Avenue to College Avenue, hereafter referred to as Eastern Sir Francis Drake Boulevard; College Avenue from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to Kent Avenue, and Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from College Avenue to the Ross Town Limits, labelled Western Sir Francis Drake Boulevard.

Eastern Sir Francis Drake Boulevard

Land Use. The north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard is zoned R-3:G-1, except for the eastern most parcel, which is zoned R-2. The zoning designation on the south side of the street from the corner of College Avenue to AP #74-031-61 (913 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) is C-2-H, with a strip of R-1 designation that runs along the rear of parcels 74-031-65, 70, 61, 62, 44 and 45. The three eastern most parcels were rezoned from C-2-H to the current designation of CP when concurrent Master Plans were approved.

The existing land uses on the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard are predominantly multiple-family residences. Existing density in this area ranges from 17 to 54 units per acre with an average of 31 units per acre. The only exceptions to this development pattern are: the Kentfield Fire Station; the vacant parcel, AP #71-143-62; the commercial use on parcel #71-142-18; a single-family dwelling on parcel #71-142-19; and a small medical office on AP #71-161-47, 48 and 49.

Existing land uses on the south side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard are a mix of commercial space, offices and residences. Residences are generally located on the second story or in the rear of older commercial uses.

Design Character. The character of the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard is primarily one of two-and three-story stucco structures, in most cases set fairly close to the front property line, with parking in the rear or underneath the buildings. In some instances, parking is located in front of the buildings. Generally, front yard setbacks are between 5 and 10 feet.

The design character on the south side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from the Alpine House (AP #74-031-45) to the Ski Shop (AP #74-031-39) is predominantly automobile-oriented, disjointed commercial frontage. Buildings within this area are typically freestanding, surrounded by parking and landscaping. The structures are generally one and two stories above the street level. Several of the more recently constructed buildings have parking located under the rear of the structures. Setbacks from the front property line vary from about 5 feet to over 20 feet, with older buildings generally being set closer to the street than newer structures. However, the recently constructed two-story Woodfield Properties Building (AP #74-031-07) is located almost on the front property line. The design character of this area can be characterized as suburban and automobile-oriented.

From AP #74-031-69 west to the intersection with College Avenue, the character of the south side of Sir Francis Drake changes. This area is more pedestrian-oriented. Structures are set close to the front property line, typically within 5 to 10 feet, and are located on or near one or both side property lines. Due to the significant difference in elevation between the street and the rear portion of the lots, buildings are generally two stories in the front and three stories in the rear.

Signing. Because of the predominately residential nature of the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, there are currently not many signs. Signs generally are limited to one project identification sign on some of the existing apartment buildings.

On the south side of Sir Francis Drake, there is an abundance of signs and sign types. Most signs do not conform to the County's sign ordinance in terms of numbers, size and location. There are numerous signs which were constructed without sign permits. In general, the signs in this area are confusing and distracting because of their numbers. Most signs are un-attractive and/or do not blend well with the design of the buildings or one another.

Access. Motor vehicle access to most parcels along Sir Francis Drake is somewhat constrained by the presence of the median strip which precludes left turns to and from the individual properties.

Pedestrian access is encouraged by the continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street. However, the mailbox located in the middle of the sidewalk in front of AP #71-142-19 impedes pedestrian circulation. One pair of bus stops is located in this street segment at the northeast corner of Ash Avenue and across the street in front of the Woodfield Properties Building. There are no bus shelters at these stops, and no area is available in front of the new Woodfield Building to accommodate a bus shelter in the future.

Several parcels near the corner of College Avenue have no, or inadequate parking. AP #71-031-58 presently has no parking. Given the location and size of the existing structure and the down-slope of the lot, the only possibility of providing parking on-site would be under the building, if access were available from the Tennis Club property at the rear of the lot. Similarly, AP #74-031-56 does not have on-site parking. Because of the building location near the front property line and at both side lines, access from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard is precluded. AP #74-031-60 also presently has no parking. Because of the steep slope, fill would be required to provide access from Sir Francis Drake, or access would have to be taken from the rear of the lot.

In each of these cases, parking could be provided on site if access were made available through the rear of the lot. However, this would require cooperative agreements with adjacent property owners and/or with the tennis court property in the rear (AP #74-031-64-73).

Assessor's Parcel #74-031-67, 69 presently has inadequate parking. It provides approximately five parking spaces which are restricted to residents by means of a locked gate.

Development Potential. In general, the physical condition of the structures on the north side of Sir Francis Drake appears good. Only two properties on this side of the street have been identified as having the potential for new development and/or redevelopment: AP #71-143-62, which is vacant, and AP #71-161-47, 48 and 49 (908 Sir Francis Drake), which presently contains a medical office building located on a small portion of the total site area.

There are six parcels on the south side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard that have been identified as having the potential for new development and/or redevelopment. AP #74-031-60 (939 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) presently contains a thrift shop on the lower floor, with two residential units on the second story. The structure is set back a considerable distance from the street.

AP #74-031-56 (937 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) presently contains a restaurant and a beauty parlor. The building is in questionable structural condition. It is set close to the front property line, with a large unused space in the rear.

AP #74-031-68, 69 (935 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) contains a mixed use commercial/residential structure. Skin care and jewelry stores are located on the ground floor, with residential units above and to the rear of the structure. Several detached garages are located on parcel 69. While the structure on parcel 68 is in good condition, it is felt that parcel 69 is presently under-utilized and therefore has the potential for new development.

AP #74-031-63 contains a P.G.&E. power transformer. It is expected that at some point, P.G.&E. will place this facility underground, leaving at least a portion of the site available for development.

AP #74-031-54,65 (923 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) contains two structures. Parcel 54 contains two residential units over a commercial laundry and skate rental store. Parcel 65 contains a residential unit over a garage. A horse is stabled behind the building on a vacant portion of the site adjacent to Corte Madera Creek. The structure on parcel 65 appears to be in poor condition and is, in any case, an underuse of the lot. While the structure on parcel 54 is old, it has the potential for remodeling and/or incorporation into an expanded development on the property.

AP #74-031-61 (913 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) presently contains a building occupied by a liquor store on the ground floor with residential units above. While this structure appears to be in relatively sound condition, the property has the potential for more intensive use than that which currently exists.

College Avenue

Land Use. This area is characterized by a mixed zoning pattern. The east side of College Avenue from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to AP #74-031-36 (860 College Avenue) is zoned C-2-H. The parcels from AP #74-031-37 to the

Flood Control Channel are zoned C-P. The east side of College Avenue from the Flood Control Channel south is zoned R-1, with the exception of the strip of parcels #74-102-15 through #74-102-02, which is zoned C-1-H. The west side of College Avenue including the College of Marin campus is zoned R-1, with the exception of the Kent Woodlands Shopping Center and two parcels on the southwest corner of College Avenue and Sir Francis Drake Boulevard (one of which is used as a child care center, the other for a restaurant), all of which are zoned C-2-H.

The land uses in this subarea are a mix of commercial, recreational, residential, commercial office, and school-related uses. The College of Marin is the major land use in this area. It has facilities on both sides of College Avenue extending from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to the south edge of the study area at the Larkspur City limits. At the present time, the College has no plans to increase or divest any of its landholdings or facilities.

The Kent Middle School, located on an 8.73 acre parcel on the east side of College Avenue, is the other school use in this area. This school is one of three operated by the Kentfield School District. The District has no plans to close the Kent Middle School in the foreseeable future.

Another publicly-owned area is the Corte Madera Creek Flood Control Channel, which includes a trail on the north side and a major bicycle/pedestrian path on the south side. The Tamalpais Center Women's Club is an institutional use, which is surrounded by the College of Marin Physical Education Complex and Kent Middle School. It is located on parcel #74-102-01.

The remaining portions of the east side of College Avenue are characterized by a mix of recreational, commercial, residential and office land uses. In general, the commercial and residential uses are located near the College Avenue/Sir Francis Drake Boulevard intersection, with the office uses primarily located south of the Flood Control Channel. The residences are typically located on the second story above commercial uses.

On the west side of College Avenue, the College of Marin covers virtually the entire area, with two exceptions. The parcel at the corner of College Avenue and Sir Francis Drake Boulevard is owned by the College but leased to a restaurant, the Kent Woodlands Shopping Center and Shell service station is located in the triangle formed by College Avenue, Kent Avenue and Stadium Way.

Design Character. This subarea has an urban, pedestrian-oriented atmosphere, with structures set close to the street. It is also characterized by a lack of available parking. The design character of the east side of College Avenue is primarily one of one- and two-story structures, set close to the front property line, with parking on the side or in the rear. For the most part, front yard setbacks range from zero to five feet. The new office building on AP #74-102-03 (810 College Avenue) has a 15-foot front setback, and the post office is set back 45 feet with parking in front of the building. The new Crocker Bank building (830 College Avenue) is located close to the front property line with parking on the side and rear. In most cases, the structures are located on or near one side line.

The design character of the area from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard south to the Flood Control Channel is similar to that on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard between AP #74-031-69 and College Avenue. This area is generally pedestrian-oriented, with buildings set at or near the front property line.

The west side of College Avenue is dominated by the College of Marin. The commercial triangle formed by College and Kent Avenues and Stadium Way is typical suburban shopping area, containing one-story attached commercial structures with parking to the south. A gas station is also located in this triangle.

Signing. Signs along College Avenue are primarily pedestrian-oriented. They are generally small in scale and height; many are projecting. There are also several sandwich boards and free-standing signs.

Access. College Avenue does not contain any median strips which affect automobile circulation. The existing sidewalks in this subarea consist of both asphalt paths and typical concrete sidewalks. The pedestrian and bicycle paths along the Flood Control Channel create a separate right-of-way for pedestrians, bicyclists and joggers.

There are two pairs of bus stops located in this area. One pair is located near the Flood Control Channel. Only the bus stop on the west side of College Avenue, at this point, has a bus shelter. The second pair is located near the commercial triangle. Both of these stops contain a bus shelter.

Three parcels have been identified as having inadequate parking. AP #74-031-04 (870 College Avenue) has one parking space in an alley adjacent to the building. This is substandard under the present code requirements. The size and location of the existing structure means that there is virtually no opportunity for additional on-site parking. AP #74-031-36 (860 College Avenue) presently provides parking for residents only. No parking is provided for the commercial uses. AP #74-102-03 (810 College Avenue), a newly-constructed office building, presently has 29 parking spaces; however, this appears inadequate since vehicles are sometimes double-parked.

Several parcels contain parking that is used only during certain hours of the day or that is not heavily used. The tennis court parking does not appear to be used to capacity. Parking for the Kent Middle School is heavily used while school is in session, but not during the evening. The school presently allows parking in its lot during the evening hours. These areas could be used to help to alleviate parking problems in the area during periods when they are not heavily used. It should be noted that any such shared parking would require cooperative agreements between the involved property owners.

Development Potential. There are six parcels in this area which have been identified as having the potential for new development or redevelopment. All are located on the east side of College Avenue, and five of the parcels are contiguous:

AP #74-031-04 (874 College Avenue) presently contains a commercial structure occupied by the Booksellers Cafe, a combined bookstore/restaurant. It is a one-story structure set on the front property line and north side line.

AP #74-031-36 (860 College Avenue) contains a two-story structure built to the front and north side property lines. It contains a restaurant use on the ground floor with two residential units above. In addition, a trailer used as a residence is located in the rear of the parcel. The existing commercial building appears to be in good physical condition, but the parcel is under-utilized. In early 1979, use permit and design review approval was granted to allow the construction of three new residential units and 12 parking spaces on the rear portion of the property. The project was never constructed, and both approvals have since expired.

AP #74-031-37 is presently vacant. This is a relatively large parcel, irregularly shaped, extending to the flood control channel to the south. A natural drainage course runs through the rear of the parcel.

AP #74-031-72 (858 College Avenue) supports a one-story building, containing a restaurant, bookstore and beauty parlor. AP #74-031-01 (848 College Avenue) contains an attractive one-story, brick building used as a real estate office. Access to parking, located in the rear of the structure, is from the adjacent lot. These last three parcels are under the same ownership and were rezoned to C-P in early 1978 as part of a concurrent Master Plan Application. This Master Plan approval, which included new office space, retail stores and an additional restaurant, was never vested and has since expired.

AP #74-102-04 (818 College Avenue) is a narrow parcel (30 feet wide) sandwiched between the post office and a new professional office building. The existing structure contains a French laundry on the ground floor and one residential unit on the second floor. The existing structure appears to be substandard.

While all of the above six properties presently contain some development, it appears that because of their age, location or size, the potential for some intensive new development and/or redevelopment exists.

Western Sir Francis Drake Boulevard

Land Use. With the exception of the College of Marin campus (easterly of Laurel Avenue), this entire subarea is zoned R-3:G-1. This zoning designation permits multiple-family residential uses at a density of one dwelling unit per 1,500 square feet, and various other uses, including hospitals, rest homes, clinics and offices, upon securing a use permit. The College campus is zoned R-1.

Existing land uses on the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard consist of medical and professional offices, Ross Hospital, a large apartment building and a small non-conforming commercial operation. On the south side of Sir Francis Drake, uses include a convalescent hospital, a portion of the Ross Hospital complex (in a leased building), medical offices and multiple- and single-family residences. The College of Marin owns two parking lots

adjacent to the campus: one with 106 student spaces, located on the north side of Sir Francis Drake between Elm and Maple; and a small faculty lot with 22 spaces, located at Sir Francis Drake and Laurel Avenue. Existing residential density on developed parcels in this area ranges from 22 to 40 units per acre with an average of approximately 30 units per acre.

As shown on Exhibit 1, the Ross Town Limit line extends through both Ross General Hospital and the Kentfield Medical Hospital, thus resulting in split jurisdictional responsibilities.

Design Character. In contrast to other portions of the study area, Sir Francis Drake Boulevard west of College Avenue is a two-lane roadway that exhibits a certain amount of traffic congestion, especially during commute hours. All parcels are developed and generally contain mature landscaping. This subarea is automobile-oriented. All of the structures are free-standing; some have parking in the front.

The character and condition of the structures in this area are highly mixed. The north side of the street is generally characterized by two-story buildings with pitched roofs and wood exteriors. Other exterior materials include pastel-colored stucco with wood trim (Ross Apartments and Ross Hospital). The front yard setbacks range from 25 to 35 feet. Several buildings previously were large residences that have been converted to office uses.

Buildings and building complexes on the south side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard tend to be larger than those on the north side of the street. Some older, small residential uses are interspersed along the south side of the street. The larger, more modern buildings are two stories with flat roofs, stucco or wood exteriors and mature landscaping. They appear to be well maintained.

Signing. Signing for this area is generally small in scale, mainly painted wood, and not illuminated. Signs for the hospital are interior lit and appropriately sized.

Access. Access to properties on the south side of Sir Francis Drake is by driveways to off-street parking areas. The only exception is the College parking lot which has access from Laurel Avenue. Access to the properties on the north side is from either Sir Francis Drake or the intersecting side streets (Maple, Elm, Butterfly, Altamira and Toussin Avenues).

Pedestrian circulation in this subarea is provided by both paved and unpaved walkways. Paved sidewalks exist along the entire north side of Sir Francis Drake. Paved sidewalks along the south side of Sir Francis Drake are interspersed with dirt footpaths.

Crosswalks exist on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard at College, Laurel and Toussin Avenues, and at the Ross Hospital driveway entrance. Bus stops are located at the Ross Hospital entrance and at College Avenue. A bicycle/pedestrian path follows the south side of the Flood Control Channel, running behind the properties located in the southwest portions of the study area. This path connects to Sir Francis Drake via a bridge crossing at the Kentfield Hospital entrance driveway, thereby creating a pedestrian/bicycle access way from the Ross/Kentfield Hospital area to the Marin College campus to the south.

In general, the amount of available parking within the subarea appears adequate. The only use having inadequate parking is Ross General Hospital. Parking for the Hospital is 0.7 spaces per bed while the national standard is 1.5 spaces per bed. Discussion with the Hospital staff indicates that parking is a problem and is one factor leading to their decision to relocate (see Section IV).

Development Potential. All structures on the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard appear to be in good to excellent condition. On the south side of Sir Francis Drake, the condition of the buildings varies from good for the multiple-family, office and institutional uses, to relatively poor for the single-family structures.

There are four parcels in this subarea that have been identified as having the potential for redevelopment: AP #71-122-01, 05 (1112 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard), located on the north side of the street, presently contains a well preserved two-story house, which is used as an office building, and associated parking. It appears likely that these parcels could support an intensification of use by the addition of a new structure or by adding to the existing structure.

AP #74-011-50 (1117 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) contains three 1950's-era duplexes, which are one-story, older structures in average condition. This use is of a much lower intensity than the development that has occurred in other portions of this subarea.

AP #74-011-51 (1109 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) contains an older single-family house that is occupied by Buckelew House, a non-profit public service agency. This agency operates a residential care facility for emotionally disturbed adults.

AP #74-011-18 (1045 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard) contains two single-family residences in poor structural condition.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

Land Use. It is assumed that the existing broad mix of uses in the study area will remain and similar new ones should be accommodated. Specific land use recommendations for each subarea are made below. Exhibit 2 shows the proposed land uses.

Because of the study areas proximity to public transit and shopping and because of the nature of the community, high density residential development is appropriate. Therefore, in all subareas, smaller units are encouraged in new residential developments in order to provide more affordable housing. Projects with large units (2-4 bedrooms), may not be appropriate at the maximum allowed density.

Zoning. To better implement the proposed land uses, reflect the existing development pattern, and allow the flexibility and control provided by planned district zoning, specific zoning designation changes are being recommended for some areas. Zoning recommendations are shown on Exhibit 3. To better implement the recommendations of this report, two new zoning districts are proposed: Public Facilities (PF) and Planned Office District (OP).

Public Facilities (PF) District would allow publicly owned institutional uses such as schools, fire stations, etc., and would be applied to property such as the College of Marin, Kent Middle School, and the Kentfield Fire Station. This would be a more appropriate zoning than the existing R-1 designation of the College and Middle School, and the R-3 designation of the fire house. The PF District would contain a mechanism for determining appropriate land use and zoning designations in the event that publicly-owned lands were declared surplus, as is currently occurring with numerous school sites around the County. This zoning district could be applied to other school sites in the unincorporated area.

Planned Office District (OP) would allow a range of administrative and professional office uses and single and multi-family residential uses subject to master plan approval. Permitted uses are as follows:

- o Banks, savings and loan associations, and other financial institutions.
- o Medical and dental offices and clinics.
- o Organizational meeting facilities.
- o Association, business, corporation, executive and professional offices.
- o Insurance offices.
- o Real estate offices.
- o All uses permitted in the current Administrative Professional (A-P) District.
- o Single and multi-family residential.

This new zoning district is being recommended because the range of allowed uses in the current Administrative Professional District is so narrow that it would exclude many of the existing office uses in the study area, including banks, insurance companies and real estate offices. It is also anticipated that the new planned office district will have application elsewhere in the County where individual office buildings and/or large-scale office complexes are appropriate (uses that are not allowed in the A-P District) and the broad range of commercial uses allowed in the CP District are not.

It is also recommended that the current RMPC Zoning District be amended to delete the requirement for setting a residential density at the time an RMPC District is established. Past experience with this district indicates that it is difficult to establish an appropriate residential density designation until the mix and intensity of uses proposed for a specific parcel is known.

Design Standards. Under each of the subarea headings, specific recommendations are made regarding setbacks, height and siting of new development and/or redevelopment of individual parcels. These recommended standards vary considerably from one subarea to another and are intended to implement the land use and design character policies of this report.

Generally, in pedestrian-oriented locations, buildings should be set close to the street; where appropriate, structures should attempt to create continuous building frontages and should incorporate open second floor balconies and stairways, outdoor dining areas and pedestrian plazas to maximize the intensity of use.

In more automobile-oriented subareas, new buildings should be set back further from the street, should be predominantly free-standing in nature, and should include substantially more landscaping.

In all subareas, pre-set or stereotyped architectural styles (such as most franchise buildings) are not appropriate.

Sign Standards. The recommended sign standards were also designed to relate to the proposed land uses and general design character of the individual subareas. For example, in more pedestrian-oriented areas, smaller, painted and carved, wall-mounted, exterior lit signs are appropriate, while in more auto-oriented subareas, large, interior lit, free-standing signs may be appropriate.

Access/Parking. As noted in Section II (Existing Conditions), the entire study area is characterized by a lack of available off-street parking. This situation was aggravated when Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, between McAllister and College Avenues, was widened to four lanes, thereby eliminating parking in front of many of the existing buildings. The parking situation is also aggravated by the College of Marin. While the college probably provides sufficient parking for students and faculty (approximately 1130 spaces), the available parking is not always fully utilized for a variety of reasons including: adversity to payment of parking permit fees (which are \$5 per semester), the proximity of parking lots to classroom buildings and inadequate signing of visitor parking facilities. Parking problems are particularly acute at the beginning of each semester, when new students are unfamiliar with the layout of the campus.

To control student parking, the County has placed a 40 minute time limit on many of the streets in the Kentfield area. Residents can be exempted from this restriction by obtaining an "A" sticker from the Kentfield Sheriff sub-station. In addition to student parking, there is a lack of parking for commuters within the study area.

Under each of the subarea headings, specific recommendations are made regarding provisions for parking. Additionally, provisions shall be made for bicycle parking in all areas, especially subareas B, C and D.

Public Improvements. This study also includes recommendations for improvements within the public right-of-way. Some of these recommendations can be implemented when and if new development or redevelopment occurs on adjacent parcels; others will require the expenditure of County, Transit District or Federal funds.

KENTFIELD URBAN DESIGN STUDY

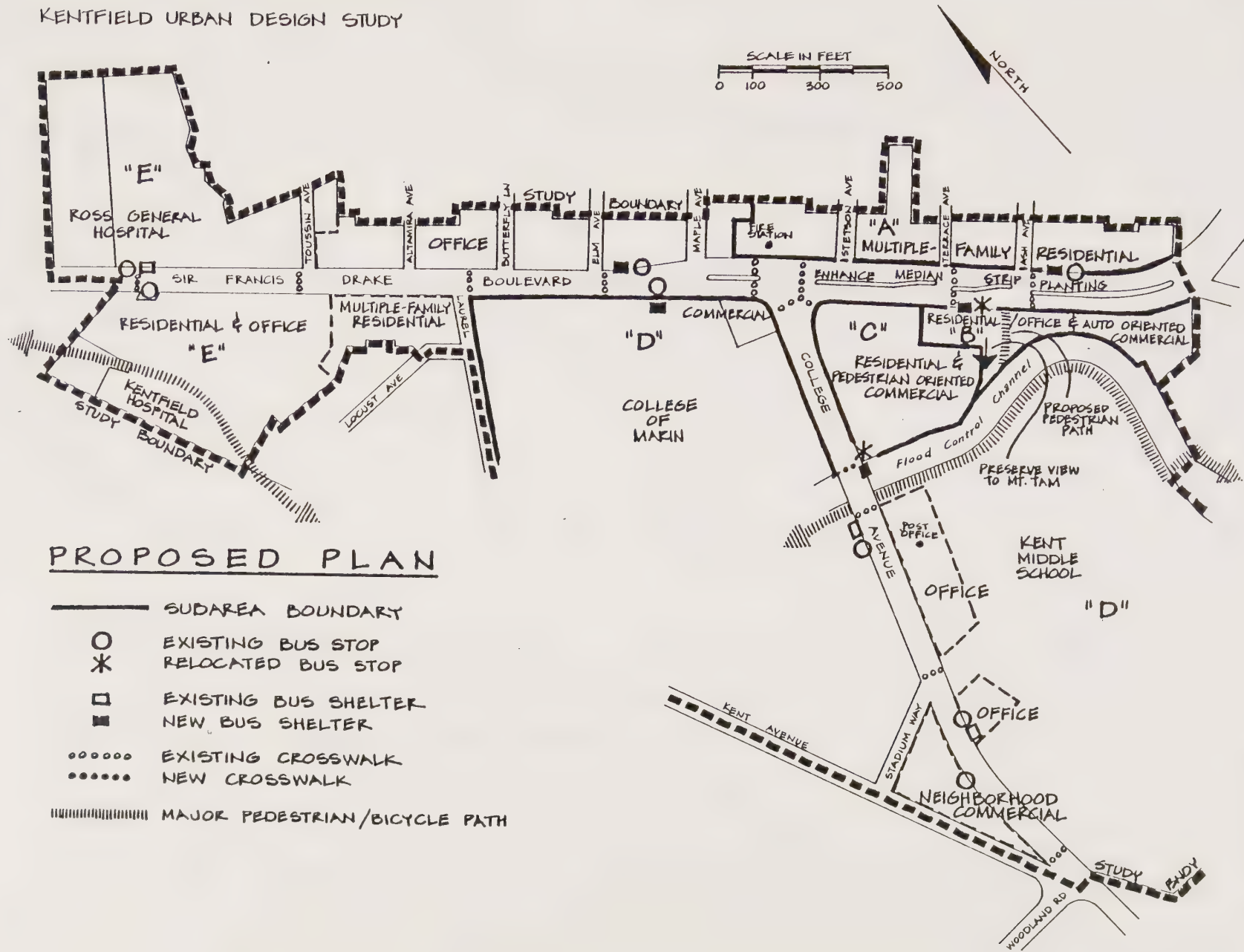
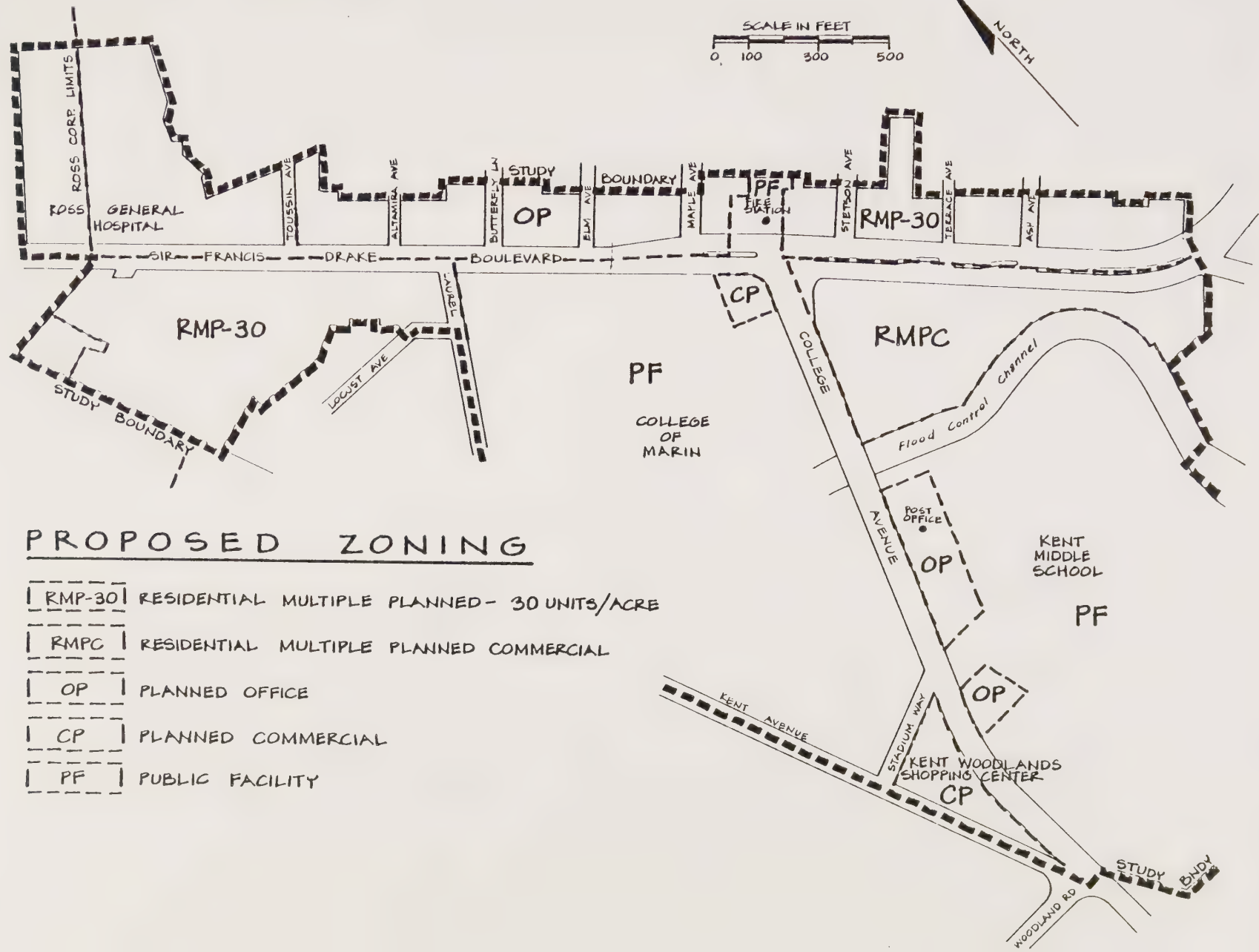


EXHIBIT 2

KENTFIELD URBAN DESIGN STUDY



PROPOSED ZONING

RMP-30	RESIDENTIAL MULTIPLE PLANNED - 30 UNITS/ACRE
RMPC	RESIDENTIAL MULTIPLE PLANNED COMMERCIAL
OP	PLANNED OFFICE
CP	PLANNED COMMERCIAL
PF	PUBLIC FACILITY

Subarea A: Residential Corridor

This subarea is the northern frontage of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from the firehouse east to McAllister Avenue.

Land Use/Zoning. Except for the firehouse, this area should be limited to multiple-family residential use. The firehouse should be rezoned from R-3:G-1 to the new Public Facilities (PF) District. The remainder of the sub-area should be rezoned from R-3:G-1 and R-2 to RMP-30 (Residential, Multiple Planned District - 30 units/acre). This RMP-30 designation is approximately equivalent to the current zoning which allows approximately 30 units per acre. The existing developed density in this area ranges from 17 to 54 units per acre with an average of 31 units per acre. This zoning change would also remove the R-2 designation from half of parcel #71-161-52, which is presently used for parking for the adjacent apartment building.

AP #71-143-62 could be developed with up to five multiple-family units under existing zoning. Under proposed zoning, five multiple-family units would be allowed. AP #71-161-47, 48 and 49, which are all under the same ownership, presently contain a small medical office building and associated parking. Present zoning would allow 16 residential units on these parcels. The proposed zoning would allow 16 multiple-family residential units.

With the exception of AP #71-161-49, 71-142-19 and 71-142-18, which contain a doctor's office, a single-family residence in addition to an apartment house, and a commercial use, respectively, all of the parcels in the area proposed to be designated RMP-30 currently contain multiple-family residences. The commercial use on parcel #71-142-18, which is non-conforming under the existing zoning, would remain non-conforming under the proposed RMP-30 zoning designation. This is the only use that would be non-conforming under the proposed zoning.

Design Standards. The maximum height should be two stories and/or two stories over parking to a maximum height of 35 feet. Structures should be designed in response to specific site characteristics, particularly topography. Units should be sited and designed to minimize Sir Francis Drake Boulevard road noise intrusion on both indoor and outdoor living spaces. Parcels along this corridor have unobstructed solar access across Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, which should be considered in siting and designing residential units. Front yard setbacks on both Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and the side streets should be a minimum of 10 feet. No parking should occur within the front yard setback limit.

Stucco, shingle, and wood are considered appropriate materials. Passive and active solar design should be incorporated into new development and/or redevelopment.

Future development on AP #71-161-47, 48, and 49 shall retain, to the maximum extent possible, the existing vegetation, including acacia trees, which provide a screen between the parcel and the single-family residences to the north.

Sign Standards. Small identification signs containing only the project name and address should be allowed. Signs shall be externally lit, horizontal in proportion, and shall not exceed a maximum of 12 square feet. There should be no more than one identification sign per project. All new signs should be incorporated into the architectural and landscape design and be preferably mounted on the building or on low landscape walls.

Access/Parking. Where feasible, parking should be located under structures and screened from view from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Access for AP #71-161-47, 48, 49, and #71-143-62 should be from the adjacent side streets, Ash Avenue and Stetson Avenue, respectively. There appears to be little need and/or potential for shared parking within this area.

Public Improvements. A large, high-branching street tree shall be selected for use along the property frontages. The mail collection box located in the middle of the sidewalk near Ash Avenue should be relocated. Bus stops and bus shelters shall be located as shown on Exhibit 2.

In order to facilitate easier (and safer) pedestrian and bicycle crossing of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, handicapped and bicycle curb cuts should be constructed in conjunction with curb extensions to the edge of the outside travel lane on the west side of the Terrace and Ash intersections. A typical design for these curb extensions is illustrated on Exhibit 4. The size and design of these "curb extensions" shall be such that several large deciduous street trees could be located in each one.

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE BLVD



Subarea B: Sir Francis Drake Commercial Corridor

This subarea is the southern frontage of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from 929 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, AP #74-031-39, east to McAllister Avenue.

Land Use/Zoning. Uses in this area would be primarily a continuation of the existing ones: a mix of residential, commercial and office space. It is estimated that the overall mix of uses would be approximately 50 percent commercial, 25 percent office and 25 percent residential, with the commercial uses on the ground floor and the office and/or residential uses on the second floor. Allowable office uses would include professional offices, such as lawyers and accountants, and real estate offices. Allowable commercial uses would include relatively large single-tenant, specialty retail stores similar to those presently in this area. It should be recognized that this subarea has developed in a primarily automobile-oriented and not a pedestrian-oriented manner.

Proposed zoning for this subarea is RMPC (Residential/Commercial Multiple Planned District) from the present mix of zoning designations of C-2-H, R-1, and CP. Rezoning this subarea will better relate the zoning to the existing land uses and parcel lines by removing the archaic R-1 designation from the rear of some lots. In addition, the RMPC designation will allow the flexibility and control provided by planned district zoning, while allowing a mix of residential, commercial and office uses.

It should be noted that no residential density is recommended in conjunction with the RMPC designation. If a particular parcel is proposed for 100% residential development, a density of up to 30 units per acre (RMPC-30) will be considered through the Master Plan process. If a mix of residential and commercial uses is proposed the residential density will be reduced. The exact number of residential units and the amount of non residential space will be determined through the Master Plan review process.

Design Standards. Maximum height should be two stories at the street frontage and three stories over parking in the rear to a maximum height of 35 feet. Buildings should be sited back slightly from the street. These setback areas should be developed to create individual pedestrian spaces in front of buildings, such as that in front of the Alpine House. Minimum front yard setbacks shall be five feet, with no building generally located more than 15 behind the property line. Large deciduous street trees should be planted along the property frontages as the opportunity arises.

All structures shall be sited toward the front of the lot. Building mass should be broken into component units and the roof form and silhouette should be varied.

Any future structure on AP #74-031-63 (PG&E substation) shall be sited adjacent to the building on AP #74-031-49 to screen the concrete block fire wall. The driveway to the rear of the parcel should be located so as to maintain a view corridor to Mt. Tamalpais.

Primary building materials shall be wood or shingles. Bright accent colors may be allowed where appropriate. Specific materials and colors shall be selected for compatibility with the structural system of the building, its architectural character, and the other materials being utilized. Pre-set architectural styles and colors (such as typically used by franchise operations) should be avoided.

Future development should be designed to preserve significant view corridors to Mt. Tamalpais wherever possible. Specifically, future development on AP #74-031-54, 56 should retain a visual corridor to Mt. Tamalpais in conjunction with construction of a pedestrian pathway connection to the existing trail along the Flood Control Channel. Future site design of parcels abutting the Flood Control Channel should recognize this relationship and treat it as a positive design feature. Where appropriate and feasible, active and/or passive solar design should be incorporated into new construction.

Sign Standards. All signs shall be compatible and in proper scale with the building and its architectural character. Signs should preferably be mounted on the building and incorporated into its design at the Master Plan/Development Plan stage. All signing for individual buildings or complexes of buildings shall be accomplished in a coordinated manner. Signs shall be primarily exterior lit, carved or painted wood signs, or interior lit individual wall-mounted letters. Any interior lit cabinet signs shall have a dark painted-out background with only the letters illuminated.

Appropriate signing for this subarea is best illustrated by the Woodfield Properties Building where a series of attractively-designed and appropriately-scaled painted wood signs complement the building design. The Alpine House Project, with its series of relatively small, poorly designed, uncoordinated signs, which detract from an otherwise nicely designed complex, and the large Ski Shop sign on AP #74-031-39, which has no relationship to the building's architectural character, exemplify recently installed, poorly executed signing within the subarea.

Access/Parking. Parking should be located in the rear half of the lots and/or under the structures. Parking areas should be screened from open views from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. All new parking lots shall be designed and planted with appropriate deciduous trees so that 50 percent of the parking areas will be shaded at midday within 15 years of planting.

As individual parcels develop and or redevelop, the potential for shared parking areas and access driveways shall be encouraged. A pedestrian connection between Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and the path along the Flood Control Channel should be provided through AP #74-031-54, 56.

Public Improvements. The type of curb extensions and related improvements recommended for Subarea A are also appropriate in this subarea. Bus stops and bus shelters shall be located as shown on Exhibit 2.

Subarea C: Kentfield Corners

This subarea contains the southern frontage of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from 933 Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, AP #74-031-69, west to College Avenue and the east side of the College Avenue frontage from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to the Flood Control Channel.

Land Use/Zoning. Proposed land uses would include intensive, pedestrian-oriented commercial uses such as coffee shops, restaurants, stationery stores, bookstores, and other college-related commercial uses. Except for those parcels which lack street frontage, office uses should be de-emphasized and the continuation and addition of upper level residential uses should be encouraged. For parcels with street frontage, commercial uses would be located on the ground floor, with residences above. Because of its limited street frontage and visibility the 0% vacancy rate for office space in the area and the fact that the surrounding parcels are primarily commercial and not residential, commercial and office use should be encouraged on Assessor's Parcel #74-031-64 if the tennis club is phased out."

The subarea should be rezoned from C-2-H and CP to RMPC. This will place a uniform zoning on the entire tennis club property which presently includes a band of R-1 designation. This zoning designation will allow a mix of residential and commercial uses, will provide the flexibility and control inherent in planned district zoning and will assure that contiguously owned parcels are planned and developed jointly. As in Subarea B, no residential density recommendation is being made for the RMPC zoning designation. A maximum of 30 units per acre will be considered for those projects proposing 100% residential development. If a mix of uses is proposed, the residential density will depend on the amount of commercial space proposed. In all cases, small residential units are preferred. Projects with large units (2-4 bedrooms), may not be appropriate at the maximum allowed density.

Design Standards. The height limit for parcels with College Avenue frontage shall be two stories to a maximum height of 27 feet. The maximum height for parcels with frontage on Sir Francis Drake Boulevard shall be two stories at the front of the parcel and three stories over parking at the rear to a maximum height of 35 feet. Because developable portion of the tennis club property is set back a considerable distance from College Avenue, a limit of three stories to a maximum of 35 feet will be considered for the parcel. However, protection of views from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and the residential properties to the north shall be considered in the design and siting of any new development of this parcel.

Structures shall be set fairly close to the front property line. Generally, the minimum front yard setback shall be zero feet to ten feet. Development of intensively-used pedestrian plazas shall occur in front of and around the ground level commercial uses. Parking shall not be located in the front setback and shall be hidden in the rear and/or under structures. There shall be a zero side yard setback on at least one side and, where appropriate, on both sides of the structure. Large, high branching, deciduous street trees shall be planted along the property frontage as the opportunity arises.

Buildings shall be designed such that the mass is broken up into component parts and the rooflines are varied and facades articulated. Where appropriate, outdoor dining spaces should be designed into the project. Open second floor balconies, open stairways, and other architectural devices designed to maximize the sense of activity and use should be incorporated into the building design.

Appropriate materials include wood, shingles, stucco (used on relatively small articulated surfaces only) and brick. In this subarea, painted "super graphic" building detailing may also be appropriate.

Future development of AP #74-031-68, 69 shall preserve a significant view corridor to Mt. Tamalpais. Any future development of AP #74-031-60 shall preserve and incorporate into the project design the large poplar and acacia trees in the southeast corner of the parcel.

Development of parcels abutting the Flood Control Channel shall treat this area as a positive design feature. Future development of AP #74-031-37 shall incorporate the natural drainage course into the project design. The brick building on AP #74-031-01 should be recognized as being architecturally significant and as such should be incorporated into any development proposal for the site.

Sign Standards. Signs should be predominately pedestrian-oriented and small in scale. Signs painted on windows and small carved and/or painted projecting signs are appropriate for providing pedestrian identification. Carved and/or painted exterior lit wall-mounted signs may be appropriate for primary identification for larger uses.

Sandwich board signs smaller than five square feet may be allowed where they do not pose a safety hazard to pedestrians. Free-standing and interior lit signs are inappropriate for this subarea. Materials and colors shall be selected to be compatible with the character and architectural style of the building.

Access/Parking. With the development and/or redevelopment of any parcels within this subarea, the potential for shared parking and common access points should be thoroughly explored. Parking should be located to the rear and/or under new structures on AP #74-031-60, 56, 68; and, if possible, one inter-connected driveway system with access through the tennis center parking lot and/or parcel 68 should be developed to serve this portion of the subarea. The possibility of shared parking and/or access through the three commercial properties fronting on College Avenue and the tennis club should also be explored.

The precise parking ratio for individual projects shall be determined at the Master Plan stage based upon the nature and ratio of the proposed residential and commercial mix and their anticipated hours of peak parking demand. If shared parking is not feasible parking ratios should conform with County standards.

Public Improvements. Street improvements within this subarea should consist primarily of replacing existing deteriorated sidewalks. Use of brick, exposed aggregate and/or bomanite should be considered.

An adequately-sized bus shelter should be constructed by Marin County Transit/Golden Gate Transit District on the exposed aggregate slab which was recently installed between the Madison Company Building and Corte Madera Creek. The bus stop sign should be moved from its existing location on the bridge to the new slab. A new crosswalk across College Avenue should be installed by the County to connect the College campus with the new bus stop location.

Subarea D: College Avenue Office/Commercial Corridor

This subarea consists of the west side of College Avenue from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard to Kent Avenue and the east side of College Avenue from the Flood Control Channel south to the Larkspur City Limits. This subarea includes the College of Marin and Kent Middle School.

Land Use/Zoning. Neighborhood-serving commercial uses should continue in the Kent Woodlands Shopping Center. Continuation of the existing office uses should be encouraged on the east side of College Avenue.

The College of Marin Campus and Kent Middle School property should be rezoned from R-1 to PF (Public Facilities). The remaining parcels on the east side of College Avenue should be rezoned from C-1-H and R-1 to the proposed OP (Planned Office) designation. The Kent Woodlands Shopping Center and the restaurant on the corner of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and College Avenue should be rezoned from C-2-H to CP. Any change in the character and/or type of use at the restaurant parcel located at the corner of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard and College Avenue should be subject to review and approval by the County with any significant change requiring a new Master Plan application and the associated public hearings before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

The only land use which would become non-conforming under these revised zoning designations would be the French laundry on AP #74-102-04. This is also the only parcel in the subarea which has the potential for redevelopment.

When their present lease expires, the Post Office should be encouraged to relocate to a more easily accessible location, preferably in an existing commercial area among other highly utilized services. The Woodlands Shopping Center would be an appropriate location.

Design Standards. Redevelopment of AP #74-102-04 should be limited to a small one- or two-story building. The structure should be located adjacent to the north property line. Appropriate materials include wood, shingles or stucco. Large, high branching street trees should be planted along the property frontage as the opportunity arises.

Sign Standards. Signs on the east side of College Avenue should be incorporated into the building design and/or mounted on low architectural walls. Free-standing and wall-mounted interior lit, plexiglass cabinet signs are inappropriate. Sign copy should be limited to tenant name, logos and addresses. Exterior lit painted and/or carved signs and interior lit individual plexiglass letters are appropriate on this side of College Avenue.

The size, material and colors of new tenant identification signs in the Kent Woodlands Shopping Center should be compatible with other existing signs in the Center.

Access/Parking. If parcel #74-102-04 is redeveloped, parking should be located behind the new structure with access either along the south property line or preferably (because of the 30-foot width) from AP #74-102-03 (Newcourt Building), in which case a mutually-beneficial shared parking agreement could be obtained.

Public Improvements. Substandard and/or deteriorated sidewalk along College Avenue should be replaced. In addition, the divider strips at the intersection of College, Kent, Woodland, and Magnolia Avenues should be repaired, replaced and/or landscaped.

Subarea E: Sir Francis Drake Boulevard Office/Residential Corridor

This subarea includes the north and south sides of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard from College Avenue to the Ross Town Limits.

Land Use/Zoning. In general, recommended uses and zoning follow the development pattern which currently exists in this subarea.

The professional office uses which have developed on the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard west of the fire station should be maintained by rezoning this area including the Ross Apartments and Ross Hospital, to the new OP District. Because of the topography, traffic generation, and proximity to residential neighborhoods, the area from Toussin Avenue to the Ross town limits shall be developed with primarily residential uses.

The pattern of uses on the south side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard should be continued by rezoning this area to RMP-30. When new development and/or redevelopment occurs in this area, residential uses should be encouraged on those properties between the Ross Hospital (AP #74-011-39) and Laurel Avenue. The remaining area on the south side should continue as a mix of residential/professional/hospital uses.

The two college parking areas are included in the above recommendations on the assumption that the College may, at some time, replace those lots with less expensive parking areas, thereby making these parcels available for development.

The Ross Town Limits should be adjusted to reflect the existing ownership/use patterns at Ross and Kentfield Hospitals (AP #71-121-01; 74-011-48, 56, 74, 76, 80, 81, and 82).

Design Standards. Since this subarea is predominately developed with buildings in good condition, and since few opportunities for redevelopment or conversion exist, the following recommended design standards are intended to reflect the character of the existing development. The maximum height should be two stories and/or two stories over parking to a maximum height of 35 feet. The height of the building shall take into consideration the potential for intrusion into the privacy of the adjacent Granton Park neighborhood. Front setbacks along Sir Francis Drake should be a minimum of 15 feet and a maximum of 30 feet. Side setbacks along intervening side streets (Maple, Elm) should be a minimum of ten feet. Rear setbacks should be determined at the time of Design Review or Master Plan approval and should take into consideration the proximity and nature of surrounding uses, and existing site constraints.

Materials and colors should be natural wood or stucco/masonry. Large blank stucco or masonry walls should be avoided. Residential development should have pitched roofs with materials/colors related to the architectural character of the structure.

Landscaping should relate to the established patterns along the streetscape. All new parking lots shall be designed and planted with appropriate deciduous trees so that 50 percent of the parking area will be shaded at midday within 15 years of planting.

Sign Standards. All signs should be automobile-oriented and respect building scale and location. Free-standing signs should not be permitted unless the building wall is not readily visible from the street. A maximum of one identification sign with street number should be permitted. Generally, signs should be wood with painted or raised letters to match the pattern of the area. Interior lit signs should be limited to medical facilities with nighttime operations. All other illumination should be exterior and of low intensity. Sign review should be included in all new development proposals as a part of the overall design concept.

Access/Parking. Parking requirements should meet the standards established in Title 24, Marin County Code. Wherever possible, parking access should be from side streets and not from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Parking should generally be located either under or behind buildings and away from Sir Francis Drake. Parking areas should be landscaped and screened from adjacent properties and from Sir Francis Drake Boulevard. Where feasible, parking should not be permitted in the front setback area.

Any development of the parcel immediately west of the College faculty parking lot at Laurel Avenue (AP #74=011-18) should consider the potential for shared parking and access with possible future uses of the faculty lot. Any redevelopment of the Ross General Hospital property (A.P. #71-121-01, 23, and 72-241-22) should insure the provision of adequate parking. Appropriate uses (re-uses) should not increase traffic above present levels generated by the hospital.

Public Improvements. When funds become available, the overhead utility lines along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, and to the extent feasible along the intersecting side streets, should be undergrounded. Wheelchair access should be developed throughout the study area. This includes providing sidewalks, as specified below, and curb cut/ramps at street intersections. This is particularly important because of the numerous hospitals and clinics in the subarea. Paved sidewalks, a minimum of four feet wide, should be provided in the following locations:

- (1) Along both sides of the student parking lot between Maple and Elm.
- (2) Along the east side of Toussin Avenue within the study area.
- (3) Along all street frontages of the faculty parking lot at Laurel and Locust Avenues.
- (4) Along the south side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard where missing, and along Ross Hospital west of the hospital entrance.

The need for on-street parking along Sir Francis Boulevard from the Ross Town Limits to College Avenue should be evaluated. A particularly troublesome parking situation exists for the four spaces adjacent to the non-conforming commercial use (Alpine House) between Elm Avenue and Butterfly Lane where vehicles backing into the street create a traffic hazard.

Adjacent Residential Neighborhoods. During the public hearings on this study discussion occurred regarding the residential zoning designation on parcels in the Kentfield area outside the study area boundaries. This discussion centered on two specific areas; the Laurel, Locust and Cedar Avenue area between Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, the west side of the College of Marin campus and Corte Madera Creek; and the area on the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard around Terrace, Stetson and Maple. Both of these areas are currently zoned R-1:B-1, but are developed with some non-conforming duplexes which cannot be improved or rebuilt if they are destroyed. These areas should retain their current residential character and to this end no change in the current zoning should occur and conversions to commercial and/or office use should not be allowed. However, in order to reflect the current pattern of development in these neighborhoods, to allow the existing units to be legally rehabilitated, and if and/or where appropriate the addition of new units in this area which is close to the College campus, medical facilities, public transportation and shopping, this area should be considered as an area for application of the County's Second Unit Ordinance.

IV. AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

During the preparation of this study, the need for further examination of areas outside the scope and boundaries of this document became apparent. There is the need for further study in two specific areas.

Review of Residential Densities

It has become apparent during the preparation of this study that the residential zoning designation on parcels in the Kentfield area outside the study area boundaries should be evaluated and possibly revised. Two areas which could be included in this study are: the Laurel, Locust and Cedar Avenue area between Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, the west side of the College of Marin Campus and Corte Madera Creek; and the area on the north side of Sir Francis Drake Boulevard around Terrace, Stetson and Maple. Both of these areas are currently zoned R-1:B-1, but are developed with many non-conforming duplexes which could not be improved or rebuilt if they were destroyed.

Reuse of the Ross General Hospital property and the impacts on surrounding medical office uses if the Hospital relocates.

Ross General Hospital has, on two occasions, made application to the West Bay Health Systems Agency to move its facilities to a site, which they have already purchased, in the Smith Ranch Area of San Rafael. Both of these previous applications have been rejected by the permit granting agency. However, since the Hospital already owns the new site, it is reasonable to assume that it will continue pursuing the necessary permits to relocate. Besides leaving the existing hospital buildings and property empty, a move could also dramatically affect the surrounding office developments, since most of the space is occupied by medical offices which appear to be directly related to the hospital use. Potential reuse of the hospital property and/or buildings and an analysis of possible alternative uses for the considerable existing office space along Sir Francis Drake Boulevard would appear appropriate.

Any reuse of the Ross General Hospital property would be subject to the review and approval of the Marin County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors and would involve duly noticed public hearings. If the property is rezoned to a planned district designation, as recommended in this study, any reuse would require Master Plan approval. Relevant impacts, such as traffic and density would be considered at the Master Plan and environmental review stage.

APPENDIX A

EXPLANATION OF ZONING CATEGORIES USED IN TEXT

R-1	Single Family Residential/5.8 units per acre
R-1:B-1	Single Family Residential/7.3 units per acre
R-2	Two Family Residential/11.6 units per acre
R-3:G-1	Multip-Family Residential/29 units per acre
RMP-30	Residential, Multiple Planned District/30 units per acre
R.M.P.C.	Residential/Commercial, Multiple Planned District
C-1-H	Retail Business District
C-2-H	General Commercial District
C-P	Planned Commercial District
A-P	Administrative Professional District
P F	Public Facilities District
O P	Planned Office District

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